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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: HAITI, BANK REFORM, MIDEAST, INTERNET
FREEDOM, GENERAL MOTORS; BERLIN

- [¶1.](#) Lead Stories Summary
- [¶2.](#) Haiti Rescue Operation
- [¶3.](#) The President's Bank Reform
- [¶4.](#) Mideast Policy
- [¶5.](#) Internet Freedom
- [¶6.](#) Closure of Opel Plant in Antwerp

[¶1.](#) Lead Stories Summary

ZDF-TV's primetime newscast Heute opened with a story on Opel head Reilly's decision to close the plant in Antwerp, Belgium, in the middle of the year. ARD-TV's primetime newscast Tagesschau opened with a report on Haiti saying that "aid is reaching an increasing number of people." Several newspapers led with stories on President Obama's bank reform plans. Headlines included: "Obama wants to split large banks (Sddeutsche), "Obama castrates U.S. banks" (FT Deutschland), and "Obama cuts freedom of banks" (Handelsblatt). Frankfurter Rundschau headlined: "SPD wants to withdraw Tornados-Party sets conditions for mission in Afghanistan," Die Welt led with a story on airport security, and Frankfurter Allgemeine led with an interview with Hesse Minister President Koch. Berliner Zeitung and Tagesspiegel led with stories on the German healthcare insurances. Editorials focused on airport security and Opel's restructuring plans.

[¶2.](#) Haiti Rescue Operation

German media continued to carry lengthy reports on the situation in Haiti, highlighting that "aid supplies are now reaching many people" (ARD-TV's primetime newscast Tagesschau) and that "Aid for Haiti begins to be effective" (Tagesspiegel front-page headline). Most media also reported that the U.S. is stepping up its engagement, noting that "following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. plans to send an additional 4,000 soldiers to the Caribbean country to support the regional aid efforts" (tageszeitung front-page report). ZDF-TV's primetime newscast Heute stated in a report from Jacmel: "The American warship that anchored off the city of Jacmel

is a hopeful sign that more aid is on the way."

This morning's ARD-TV's Tagesschau reported that UN Special Envoy Clinton said it would now be important to give hope to the Haitians, particularly to create jobs. The newscast also showed Secretary Clinton saying the U.S. would increase its engagement as particularly outside Port-au-Prince people need housing, food and clean water. ARD-TV's Morgenmagazin showed a touching story of a young girl in a critical condition who was treated by a Miami pediatrician. In a separate report on ARD-TV's Morgenmagazin, a correspondent in Port-au-Prince praised the professionalism of the U.S. doctors at a mobile hospital: "We saw severely injured people coming in by the minute and being treated highly professionally. The Americans are really good at this."

In a lengthy editorial, Berliner Zeitung remarked: "Given the shock that hit Haitians, it has taken them a week to be able to look beyond the next moment again.... The world has never been closer to a catastrophe than after this quake. Calls and even videos were made from under the rubble. Before aid workers had an idea of the extent of the catastrophe, the world knew many individual stories. The overwhelming sympathy and willingness to donate might have arisen from these touching impressions communicated through the internet, which went far beyond what conventional media conveyed. The sympathy from faraway also increased the impatience with rescue workers... but the truth is that remarkable things are being done. Help is coming from all over the world. U.S. soldiers have tripled the capacities of the airport in Port-au-Prince within the shortest time... Haiti offers the opportunity for a new quality in the effort to rebuild a devastated country. Obama can demonstrate that he means his talk of a cooperative and united world."

There were no critical reports on the U.S. aid efforts; however, Frankfurter Allgemeine noted that "while America deploys another 7,000 soldiers to Haiti, Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales slandered the U.S. as an occupying country."

13. The President's Bank Reform

Many media reported on President Obama's announcement that would introduce significant limits on how banks can operate. Headlines included: "Obama wants to split large banks (Sddeutsche), "Obama castrates U.S. banks" (FT Deutschland), and "Obama cuts freedom of banks" (Handelsblatt).

Under the headline "Tame the banks-Obama has finally found the right measures against gamblers," Sddeutsche supported the President's proposal. "Barack Obama has declared war against Wall Street. Driven by the anger of the people-and the defeat in Massachusetts-the American President goes further with his proposals to regulate banks than ever before. It is good that Obama finally tackles the fundamental problem that added fuel to the crisis and could cause new financial catastrophes."

Tagesspiegel opined: "Massachusetts has made a bad choice-for Wall Street. And the fact that unemployment is also increasing in the U.S. is also bad for banks because politicians now remember diversionary maneuvers and try to satisfy the people by hitting out against banks."

Handelsblatt noted in a front-page editorial: "The most powerful man in the world should stay cool when he sets the rules that go far beyond the United States and will regulate bank deals in years to come. Barack Obama and other heads of states and governments must reach an agreement on common international standards that put a stop to the past excesses of the capital market without limiting the functioning of the money economy."

Under the headline "On behalf of the society," FT Deutschland commented on its front page: "How much the financial world gets the jitters when President Obama takes action could be seen twice yesterday. First, when Goldman Sachs made its announcement and, secondly, when the stock market responded to the President's regulation plans... Goldman Sachs' anticipatory obedience to cut bonuses could not prevent Obama's speech. If the President's plans become reality, it would hit particularly investment bankers.... Although the limits were dramatic for some banks, it would be the

right step for the American economy and its people. Particularly proprietary trading poses a great risk that the taxpayer then has to cover when governments have to rescue banks."

14. Mideast Policy

Under the headline "Shuttle diplomacy into empty space," Sddeutsche editorialized: "There is standstill although many people are moving.

Throughout the world, leaders are searching for solutions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.... With all the initiatives in his bag, U.S. special envoy Mitchell is now commuting between Jerusalem and Ramallah. However, he is travelling into empty space. While so many people are moving, the rivaling parties are stubbornly insisting on their positions. It is part of the depressing dynamics of the Mideast peace process that the international efforts are in sharp contrast to the activities of the main actors. Although they permanently declare their willingness to create peace, they continuously block the beginning of talks by ever new turns. When one is making a step forward, the other one steps back. That looks almost as if they choreographed this and cooperate closely so that they don't have to extend their hands. In such a situation, nothing can be reached with sophisticated diplomacy. If sweet-talk

does not help, Washington has to put its foot down. If Barack Obama waits too long, he will not just damage his Mideast envoy but also his own reputation. The U.S. President has enough tools at hand, ranging from financial to military means. It is time to make use of them."

15. Internet Freedom

Frankfurter Allgemeine and FT Deutschland carried reports on Secretary Clinton's speech on internet freedom. FT Deutschland headlined: "Clinton settles accounts with China's internet censorship" and noted in its intro: "In the dispute over cyber attacks on the internet giant of Google, Secretary Clinton has taken off her gloves." Frankfurter Allgemeine headlined "Clinton: Don't accept censorship" and added: "The State Department wants to provide at least 15 million dollars for defending the freedom of speech in the internet.... Meanwhile, the Chinese government expressed hope that the dispute with Google would not be a burden to the relationship with Washington."

16. Closure of Opel Plant in Antwerp

Frankfurter Allgemeine editorialized: "The closure of the plant in Antwerp has been planned for a long time and is necessary to secure the survival of the carmaker Opel... The painful cut is the first move of the unavoidable restructuring... There is no way around reducing capacity."

Handelsblatt opined: "Those who now accuse Reilly for making tough cuts only tell the people what they want to hear, not what they should know. The facts are clear: Opel is in a crisis and fights for its survival. Politicians and trade unionists must not erect any additional hurdles for the U.S. company's difficult effort to restructure the carmaker. Those who don't realize this threaten the existence of the whole company."

Tagesspiegel warned that Opel head Reilly would need the employees to restructure the company and commented: "Reilly must know that GM can restructure Opel successfully only if employees are on board and pay.... However, determination turns into arrogance when employees are played off against each other. When expressions of solidarity are just hot air credibility is gambled away."

17. Russian-Polish Relations

Sddeutsche editorialized: "The question of what Moscow is thinking by increasing its military presence in the Baltic Sea must be allowed to ask because none of the neighboring countries can be accused of any unfriendly intentions towards Russia. The short publicized fight between Warsaw and Moscow shows that both sides are still nervous neighbors. Warsaw is not alone with that feeling. Since Moscow hit out against Georgia a year and a half ago, after Georgia clumsily tried to get a province under its control, mistrust in all Eastern European countries has significantly increased. This is a fact other NATO members must take into consideration. From the

Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, countries fear Moscow's imperial reflexes."

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